

[Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Davis]

S241[?] DUP

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER Bessie [Jollenston?] ADDRESS Ogallala, Nebr.

DATE Nov. 9, 1938 SUBJECT Mr. & Mrs. [W?]. M. Davison

1. Name and address of informant Mrs. Davison and her daughter Maggie [Ditmer?]
2. Date and time of interview
3. Place of interview At Mrs. W. M. Davisons home in her dinning room.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who [put?] you in touch with informant Mrs. McCarthy, and Mr. [Issac?] Woodward.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you No one
6. [Description?] of room, house, surroundings, etc. Faced the south, shaded by a porch on the south. She has an old style book case with small glas in top and a drop leaf desk table. [A?] dinning table and chairs.

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Bessie [Jollenston?] ADDRESS Ogallala, Nebr.

DATE Nov. 9, 1938 SUBJECT Mr. & Mrs. W. M. Davison

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. Davison and Maggie Ditmer her daughte

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1. Ancestry Irish descent
2. Place and date of birth [McQuan?] Illinois, April 24, 1872.
3. Family Maggie Ditmer, Ruth, Emily and [Brunce?]
4. Place lived in, with dates Took homestead south of [Roscoe?], 1890 to 1896 lived in Ogallala 1896 to 1900, then to 1912 moved back to Ogallala.
5. Education, with dates At McQuam Illinois in common school, started in 1872
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates farmed, raised cattle, hogs, corn, alfalfa, etc.
7. Special skills and interests Her home and her family
8. Community and religious activities Used to help with church dinners, etc
9. Description of informant Medium height, heavy set, very gray
10. Other points gained in interview She is sending two granddaughters through high school. Whom had the misfortune to loose their father some years ago.

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Bessie [Jollenston?] ADDRESS Ogallala, Nebr.

DATE Nov. 15, 1938 SUBJECT Mr. & Mrs. W. Davison

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. William Davison and her daughter Maggie Ditmer

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Mrs. William Davison was born at McQuann, Knox County Illinois, April 24, 1872. Mr. Davison was born April 17, 1866, at [Joliet?] Illinois. The Davisons were also married at McQuinn Ill. Dec. [25?], 1888, coming to Keith County, Nebraska in 1890.

Mrs. Davison came by train with her baby, while Mr. Davison and a friend came with a covered wagon, and \$4.00 thinking when they got to Oxford if they could get that far there was a man lived, that owed him \$2.00 for a steer he had bought some years previous. But on their arrival they found he had gone to Lincoln, however this did not stop their journey to Keith County, as they thought of another friend Fred Johnson at Curtis Nebraska. Going on they found Mr. Johnson who gave them a little money and some food to continue their journey. On arriving at Keith County he filed on a [homestead?] south of Roscoe, in Keith County, building a sod house.

The first crop they raised was in 1893. There was a sale on the old Abraham place and Mr. Johnson went and bought a binder to harvest his [crop?] with, took it home and put it by the burn, but in a few days there came a big prairie fire and burned everything except the sod house which was not grassed over. Even burned the chickens and their crops, the binder and Mrs. Davison worked trying to help her husband to save what they could, fainted away and he [dragged?] her through the fire to a cave where her sister and her daughter were, which was all that saved her, through his presence of mind. The fire was supposed to have been set by some [capers?] south of the Ogallala bridge.

One fall Mr. Davison went to Greeley Colorado to help farm, during which time the family stayed with her people during the week and spent the week-ends at the homestead. On coming home in the fall they went out to the old homestead not being able to buy bread in those days, Mrs. Davison decided to make some biscuits, but when she looked into the flour barrel there was a huge bullsnake curled up in it, so they went without biscuits, and had to go back to town a distance of around twenty miles to buy some flour before they could make bread.

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Mrs. Davison relates another incident of when they went away for a few days and came back all their dishes, and belonging were gone except their pillows and a feather bed, did not even have knives and forks to set the table for breakfast, had to borrow some.

In 1896 the Davisons moved back to Ogallala, into a two room house that stood where the Odd Fellows hall is [now?] located, and run the Old Dennis Harrington Livery barn, which stood across the street east of the Pickett produce [building?] now stands.

Mrs. Davison says she had all kinds of narrow escapes from being drug in the saddle to killing Coons and Coyotes. But despite the hard times they always managed to have plenty of [beans?], potatoes, salt pork, homemade bread, butter and milk to eat, and for fuel they burned mostly chips.

They raised a family of five children, Maggie, Brunce, Ruth, Emily and Liddie [deceased?].